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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 04/03/09

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ARTICLES:

- (1) With approach of planned North Korean missile launch, government having hard time determining new sanctions

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Abridged slightly)
April 3, 2009

Shoichi Takayama

With the approach of North Korea's planned launch of a long range

missile which it claims to be a satellite, the government is troubled. The reason is because given a news report on the possibility of the North launching a missile with a satellite on top, a situation may arise where the government is pressed for revamping its planned response based on a ballistic missile.

Prime Minister Taro Aso held talks with British and Italian counterparts on the sidelines of the G-20 financial summit in London on the afternoon of April 1 (before dawn of April 1, Japan time). In the meetings, Aso secured the European leaders' agreement that in the event the North launched a missile, they would take the matter to the UN Security Council. Meanwhile, the government yesterday briefed crisis-management officials of the six prefectures in the Tohoku region on what could happen.

Some U.S. media reported that the missile's nose cone was oval shaped, fit to store a satellite. Speculation is spreading in the government that the North would launch a missile with a satellite on top to concoct an alibi.

The government is trying to persuade the UN Security Council permanent members, noting that even the launch of a satellite would constitute a violation of Security Council Resolution 1718 prohibiting all ballistic missile activity by North Korea.

There is a possibility, however, that the launch of a missile with a satellite -- instead of just a missile -- would make it difficult to make a forceful response.

A source connected with the government said discouragingly

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yesterday: "North Korea's fault was clear when it launched seven missiles in 2006. This time around, it seems difficult to adopt even a resolution condemning the North (which is not a sanctions resolution)." An idea is circulating to adopt a resolution seeking the thorough implementation of past UN resolutions including the prohibition of transferring nuclear and missile-related materials to North Korea.

The government is having a hard time stepping up its own sanctions against the North.

Following the missile launch, the government plans to extend its sanctions against North Korea, which are to expire on April 13, for another year instead of for six months, as in the past, and to consider additional sanction measures, as well. Economic exchanges with the North have already shrunk due to sanctions in the past. "There aren't many sanctions available to us," a senior Foreign Ministry official said.

(2) North Korean missile launch a tailwind for MD expansion; Defense Ministry, LDP call for full deployment of MD system

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Excerpts)
April 3, 2009

Koki Miura

The Defense Ministry and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) have begun calling for the expansion of the missile defense (MD) system by taking advantage of North Korea's planned launch of a long-range ballistic missile, which the North claims to be a satellite. They even envisage the possession of an early-warning satellite to detect a ballistic missile launch, in addition to upgrading the interceptor missiles.

On April 1, such LDP lawmakers from the Tohoku region as Koichi Kato (Yamagata No. 3 Constituency) and Tokuichiro Tamazawa (Proportional representation Tohoku bloc) called on Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura at the Prime Minister's Office (Kantei) to ask for the deployment of PAC-3 missiles on a regular basis.

The Self-Defense Forces have moved PAC-3 units from Hamamatsu to Akita and Iwate prefectures where a launched missile is likely to fly over. At present, there is no plan to deploy PAC-3 units in the

Tohoku region.

Administrative Vice-Defense Minister Kohei Masuda expressed in a press conference yesterday a positive stance about the full deployment of the PAC-3 system, saying: "We would like to consider it in reviewing the National Defense Program Guidelines and the Midterm Defense Buildup Program, while keeping in mind the request by (Mr. Kato and others)."

Calls are also growing not only for the expanded deployment of interceptor missiles but also for the independent possession of an early-warning satellite.

In yesterday's LDP national defense and defense policy sub-panel meeting, many pointed out the need for Japan to possess an early-warning satellite on its own. From a viewpoint of the national fiscal conditions, a Defense Ministry official presented a cautious stance, saying, "The matter requires a comprehensive judgment." At

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the same time, the official presented a policy course to carry out R&D on an infrared sensor, a pivot in a satellite, on a priority basis.

The United States and Russia are the only countries that possess early-warning satellites. The possession of such a satellite will allow Japan to rely less on the United States in terms of detection.

The initial deployment of the MD system alone is projected to cost 1 trillion yen, including the 700 billion yen already injected in it. Japan's possession of an early-warning satellite is certain to put the United States on alert.

(3) Government in final coordination on set of initial responses following North Korea's planned missile launch

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
April 3, 2009

Now that North Korea reportedly has begun fueling a missile it plans to launch, the Japanese government has entered final coordination to determine a set of its initial responses to be taken after the missile is launched. When the North test-fired its missiles in 2006, the government was criticized for its slow response. Reflecting on this experience, the government intends to quickly respond to an imminent missile launch. Even so, there are technical problems left unresolved, such as the difficulty of making a quick report.

Assuming that the North pushes ahead with its missile launch plan, the government plans to report on it to press companies and local governments within five to ten minutes after the launch. The government intends to have the media convey the news to the residents by such means as on-screen titles and flash news distributed by press companies to cellular phones.

It has been decided that once the U.S. detects a heat source emitted from a missile launch through an early-warning satellite, the U.S. will inform the Prime Minister's Office (Kantei) of the launch through the Defense Ministry. The Kantei then will announce it. Chief Cabinet Secretary Kawamura said in a press conference yesterday: "We will make efforts to report on the news of a missile launch as early as possible."

As initial responses, the government also plans to have Prime Minister Aso instruct officials in a written form about 10 minutes after a missile launch to strengthen its information-collection system. Kawamura, Foreign Minister Nakasone, and Defense Minister Hamada will meet at the Kantei to discuss initial response measures. The prime minister will join them about one hour later, and the four will analyze the given information and confer on what response Japan should make.

About one and a half hours later, Kawamura will hold a press conference to report on the launch and brief the government's series of responses. He will also express regret over North Korea's

conduct. Three hours later, members of the Security Council of Japan will meet, with the prime minister as chair, to discuss additional sanctions against North Korea and Japan's possible call for the matter to be discussed at the UN Security Council. Aso might hold a press conference.

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But some persons suggest that each government ministry concerned should first discuss response measures and then the foreign minister and the defense minister should meet at the Kantei 30 minutes after a missile launch.

Compared with its slow responses to the North's missile test-firing in 2006, the government is ready to respond to a possible missile launch quickly. In 2006, three ministers met 90 minutes after the North launched its first missile at 3:30 a.m. The chief cabinet secretary announced the news about two hours and 45 minutes later. Local governments were informed of the launch three hours after the launch. As the cause of the delay, a senior member of the Cabinet Secretariat explained: "The ballistic missile was not detected by the radar system installed on an Aegis-equipped destroyer." This time, North Korea's prior notice has made it possible for the government to make meticulous preparations.

However, there are technical problems left unsettled. Although the first report on the launch will be made five to 10 minutes later, the second report on the falling spot will come 30 minutes to one hour later. It will be difficult to quickly report on the flight process, such as whether the object is expected to fall on Japanese territory or whether it flew over Japan, because it will take time to make analysis.

The government has also begun to predict damage expected to be caused in the event that the rocket falls on Japanese territory. It first assumes that the first-stage booster would be successfully separated from the rocket but the second-stage booster fails to function properly. Given that a poisonous gas reportedly has been mixed in fuel loaded on the second-stage booster, damage might be caused to local residents' health if the booster lands on Japan without combustion. Damage might be caused by debris, bomb blasts, or heat.

Even if the object is judged to be likely to fall on Japan, it will be difficult to specify where it would fall. Even if such a judgment is made, since the rocket is expected to land on Japan in several minutes after the judgment made, evacuating residents will be difficult in effect. Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara complained: "Even if we are informed of an incoming rocket, we don't know where we should evacuate. There will be no other way but to get on a subway train."

(4) Sankei-FNN poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)
March 31, 2009

Questions & Answers

(Note) Figures shown in percentage. Figures in parentheses denote findings from a previous Sankei-FNN survey conducted March 7-8.

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 20.8 (17.0)
No 66.3 (71.0)
Don't know (D/K) 12.9 (12.0)

Q: Which political party do you support?

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Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 27.5 (26.6)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 22.2 (23.9)

New Komeito (NK) 4.1 (4.0)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 4.0 (3.2)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.3 (1.8)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.2 (0.7)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) 0.0 (0.1)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.4 (0.1)
Other political parties 1.3 (1.5)
None 37.8 (37.0)
D/K 1.2 (1.1)

Q: Do you appreciate Prime Minister Aso and his cabinet on the following points?

Prime Minister Aso's personal character
Yes 32.4 (24.0)
No 60.1 (66.9)
D/K 7.5 (9.1)

Prime Minister Aso's leadership
Yes 11.8 (7.5)
No 82.5 (85.5)
D/K 5.7 (7.0)

Economic policy
Yes 24.3 (16.3)
No 66.6 (72.3)
D/K 9.1 (11.4)

Foreign policy
Yes 25.8 (24.8)
No 57.5 (56.3)
D/K 16.7 (18.9)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is trustworthier?

Prime Minister Aso 41.0 (32.7)
DPJ President Ozawa 28.5 (31.4)
D/K 30.5 (35.9)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is better in terms of policies?

Prime Minister Aso 30.5 (25.0)
DPJ President Ozawa 39.8 (40.2)
D/K 29.7 (34.8)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is more appealing in election campaigning?

Prime Minister Aso 35.8 (28.4)
DPJ President Ozawa 31.6 (34.3)
D/K 32.6 (37.3)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

Prime Minister Aso 29.5 (23.2)
DPJ President Ozawa 30.2 (29.8)

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D/K 40.3 (47.0)

Q: DPJ President Ozawa's secretary has been indicted on the charge of violating the Political Funds Control Law. Do you think DPJ President Ozawa's account was convincing?

Yes 16.8
No 78.8
D/K 4.4

Q: Do you think DPJ President Ozawa should resign as his party's head?

Yes 62.3

No 30.8
D/K 6.9

Q: Do you think the DPJ's acceptance of DPJ President Ozawa's decision to stay on is understandable?

Yes 42.6
No 52.1
D/K 5.3

Q: Do you think the prosecutors' investigation is politically unfair?

Yes 40.7
No 46.1
D/K 13.2

Q: Do you think it is inappropriate of the prosecutors to conduct an investigation at a time when an election for the House of Representatives is close at hand?

Yes 39.9
No 45.5
D/K 14.6

Q: Do you think restrictions on corporate and organizational donations should be further tightened and that state subsidies to political parties and individual donations should be increased instead?

Yes 43.8
No 36.8
D/K 19.4

Q: Will you be personally contributing money to the political party or lawmaker you support?

Already doing 3.0
Not now, but would like to in the future 17.5
Not willing 78.5
D/K 1.0

Q: Do you think using the Internet to campaign for elections-which is currently not allowed in Japan-should be allowed?

Yes 37.4
No 47.2

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D/K 15.4

Q: Do you think using the Internet to make political contributions-which is currently not allowed in Japan-should be allowed?

Yes 52.3
No 36.7
D/K 11.0

Q: Do you think it is important to keep in touch with lawmakers or candidates for politics or elections in Japan?

Yes 82.3
No 14.1
D/K 3.6

Q: How will you use the government's cash benefits?

Q: How do you plan to spend the cash benefit?

Buy foodstuffs, daily necessities 49.7 (48.0)
Buy luxuries, spend for pleasure 23.7 (27.8)
Save the money 19.4 (17.5)
Won't receive the money 2.5 (2.7)

D/K 4.7 (4.0)

Q: How is your local government's cash handout?

Payout began, and received the money 3.2

Payout began, but yet to receive the money 14.4

Payout yet to begin 51.3

Don't know when payout will begin 30.3

Other answers 0.8

Q: Who do you think is most appropriate now for Japan's prime minister among the following politicians in the ruling and opposition parties?

Taro Aso 4.6 (4.4)

Shigeru Ishiba 3.9 (4.6)

Nobuteru Ishihara 6.2 (4.6)

Yuriko Koike 4.0 (4.5)

Junichiro Koizumi 11.1 (10.1)

Masahiko Komura 0.6 (---)

Sadakazu Tanigaki 1.0 (---)

Yoichi Masuzoe 10.4 (9.4)

Kaoru Yosano 5.7 (8.3)

Other ruling party lawmakers 2.3 (2.2)

Yoshimi Watanabe 4.5 (4.7)

Ichiro Ozawa 5.8 (5.1)

Katsuya Okada 6.5 (6.9)

Naoto Kan 4.2 (4.3)

Yukio Hatoyama 2.5 (2.2)

Other opposition party lawmakers 3.5 (3.2)

None 18.1 (18.0)

D/K 5.1 (4.5)

Q: North Korea is preparing to launch a missile. Do you feel uneasy about this?

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Yes 83.2

No 15.7

D/K 1.1

Q: Do you think Japan should be readied to intercept that North Korean missile should it be launched?

Yes 81.0

No 13.3

D/K 5.7

Q: If North Korea launched a missile, do you think international pressure on that country should be intensified through such steps as adopting a United Nations Security Council resolution?

Yes 90.5

No 5.4

D/K 4.1

Q: If North Korea launched a missile, do you think Japan should step up its sanctions against North Korea?

Yes 69.9

No 22.9

D/K 7.2

Q: When do you think the next election is appropriate for the House of Representatives?

Right away 19.5

During the first half of this year after passing the extra budget for economic stimulus measures 46.6

Upon the current term's expiry or sometime near that time during the latter half of this year 31.2

D/K 2.7

Q: Which political party would you like to vote for in the next

election for the House of Representatives in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 34.7 (30.6)
DPJ 36.4 (36.3)
NK 5.9 (5.2)
JCP 4.9 (4.5)
SDP 2.2 (2.7)
PNP 0.6 (0.8)
RC 0.0 (0.1)
NPN 0.6 (0.5)
Other political parties 6.0 (8.2)
D/K 8.7 (11.2)

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted March 7-8 by the Sankei Shimbun and Fuji News Network (FNN) over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. For the survey, a total of 1,000 persons were sampled from among men and women, aged 20 and over, across the nation.

(5) Nishimatsu Construction Co. paid 25 million yen in rents on behalf of Nikai's office: Tokyo public prosecutors questioning former executives

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MAINICHI (Page 1) (Full)
April 3, 2009

Concerning a case in which Nishimatsu Construction Co., a second-tier general construction contractor, had been paying rents on behalf of Kansai Shinpu-Kai (Kansai New Phase Organization) based in Osaka City, a political organization connected to Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Toshihiro Nikai, Mainichi Shimbun has learned through a source connected to the company that the amount of rents the company paid for nine years totaled approximately 25 million yen. Kansai Shinpu-Kai only paid the first rent of over 200,000 yen. Nishimatsu Construction paid the rest. The Tokyo Public Prosecutors Office appears to have started questioning former executives of the Kansai branch of Nishimatsu Construction in Osaka City on April 2.

The special investigation squad has been suspending investigation since they indicted Takanori Okubo (47), the state-funded first secretary to Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa on March 24. It appears that they will press ahead with an investigation regarding the company's financial assistance extended to the Nikai office.

The office in question is located on the 4th floor of a 15-storied condominium at 3 Itachibori, Nishi-Ward, Osaka City. According to a source connected with OA Engineering, based in Minato Ward, Tokyo, a company connected to Nishimatsu Construction that owns the condominium, the company refurbished a room with area of about 70 square meters with 3 bedrooms, one living room and dining room plus kitchen into an office. Nikai's younger brother, who is serving as his secretary, rented the room for over 200,000 yen a month for the use by Kansai Shinpu-Kai.

They signed a contract. However, Kansai Shinpu-Kai only paid the rent for the first month to the OA Engineering's bank account by bank remittance. No remittance was made since then. The room was provided to Kansai Shinpu-Kai rent-free until February 2, when Nikai's office terminated the lease.

The company's accounting book records that Kansai Shinpu-Kai ostensibly paid rents worth about 5.6 million yen for 2006 and 2007 to OA Engineering in several installments. However, the money actually came from Nishimatsu Construction, because it paid that amount to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Wakayama Constituency No. 3 chapter on which Nikai serves as a representative under the guise of individual donations. Nishimatsu Construction thus shouldered the full amount of rents of Nikai's office.

(6) Editorial: SDF dispatch needed for civilian protection

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)

April 3, 2009

Recently, the U.S. Obama administration unveiled new strategy aimed for the early stabilization of Afghanistan. Shortly thereafter, the Netherlands hosted an international ministerial conference in The Hague to discuss specific measures for assistance to Afghanistan.

The Hague conference on Afghanistan was held with the participation of 86 countries and organizations, including International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) members deploying troops in Afghanistan and major donors assisting with that country's reconstruction. The greater part of these countries vowed there to cooperate on the new

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U.S. strategy. We welcome this as a new step forward in the war on terror.

There was a noticeable move. Iran-squaring off with the United States and Europe over nuclear suspicions-was invited to the Afghan conference. High-ranking officials from the United States and Iran, currently in a state of diplomatic rupture, met for the first time since the Obama administration's inauguration. The two countries have reportedly agreed to keep in touch with each other.

What lies behind that is the massive influx of drugs, which are funding sources for the Taliban that used to rule Afghanistan, and refugees from Afghanistan into Iran. U.S. Secretary of State Clinton positively appreciated Iran for its stance of cooperating on drug countermeasures.

It is hardly conceivable that U.S.-Iran relations will dramatically change at once. However, it can be a breakthrough. We want to keep watching the two countries' dialogue and cooperation.

Japan has worked on Iran to participate in the Afghan conference. Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone announced that Japan would work together with Iran to implement antidrug and refugee measures. This kind of cooperation can be played up even more.

The U.S. military will send reinforcements to Afghanistan. At the same time, the United States will also substantially increase its civilian dispatch to that country. This new Afghan strategy is based on President Obama's belief that military means alone cannot overthrow Al Qaeda that is a worldwide network of terrorists. Japan, which has made actual results in the civilian area, will have many more things to do from now on.

For the time being, Japan will host a Pakistan donors conference in Tokyo on April 17. Al Qaeda elements and Taliban militants are based in the mountainous terrains near the Afghan-Pakistani border. To sweep them away, Pakistan's stability is indispensable. Japan, which will host the conference, has heavy responsibility.

Upon the Hague conference, Japan contributed as much as 300 million dollars for civilian assistance in Afghanistan. This amount is four to seven times larger than that from the United States and the European Union. That alone, however, is not enough. Japan is asked to send civilians. In Afghanistan, a total of about 130 Japanese civilians, mostly from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), are working to help with that country's reconstruction.

We think that Japan should send more human resources there and that the government should consider sending the Self-Defense Forces there to protect the Japanese civilians. Japan should be determined for a success of the new strategy.

ZUMWALT